

Governor desires, and if that is true then we can be quite certain that California will become, next year and thereafter, the veriest dumping ground in the world for quacks and half-baked, ignorant poorly equipped doctors. The people will, of course, suffer for it, but unfortunately they will not find this out till it is too late; and the general rank and file of the profession will be accused of permitting the disaster to occur, when in fact it is the people themselves that will have permitted it.

A careless and illconsidered word of criticism about some other physician's work may be as successfully the cause of a suit for **CARELESS** alleged malpractice as malicious **CRITICS.** comment. Too many physicians unfortunately are in the habit of looking somewhat patronizingly upon the work of their fellows and when this attitude finds expression in words, the impression made is distinctly unfavorable to the other fellow. Undoubtedly, in very many instances such implied reflections upon another's work are thoughtless and careless; but the result is as bad as though they had been deliberate. The exciting cause of more than two-thirds of all suits for alleged malpractice is to be found in the comment, malicious or careless, of some physician upon some other physician's work. As a rule the critic is not in possession of all the facts (one gets mighty few facts from a patient!) and when a suit is brought and he learns them, he quite frequently suffers no small discomfort and embarrassment. We, as members of the Society, are safeguarding and defending each other's professional interests against unjust and generally blackmailing assault. Should we not be equally earnest in safeguarding each other's professional good name and so prevent many suits that have no foundation in any actual failure to care for a patient properly? The careless critic who arouses discontent in the patient is more dangerous than the malicious one, for his motives are not so obvious and therefore not so easy to explain. When you feel like commenting adversely on some other doctor's work, just stop and think that the same thing may happen to you. And how would you like it?

Public health legislation by the federal government was the subject of much discussion at both the Republican and the Democratic conventions. Our dearly **PLATFORMS** beloved Senator Works journeyed to Chicago with a plank in his pocket which he wanted inserted in the Republican platform; but it never came out of his pocket. There was a distinct feeling that it was bad enough for Senator Works to make himself and the Senate ridiculous without plastering any more odium upon the whole Republican party. The Republican platform contains the following plank on public health:

"It will strive not only in the nation, but in the several states, to enact the necessary

legislation to safeguard the public health; to limit effectively the labor of women and children; to protect wage-earners engaged in dangerous occupations; to enact comprehensive and generous workmen's compensation laws in place of the present wasteful and unjust system of employers' liability, and in all possible ways to satisfy the just demand of the people for the study and solution of the complex and constantly changing problems of social welfare."

The Democratic health plank, to which a great deal of opposition was made by the eddyites and the "leaguers," is as follows:

"We reaffirm our previous declarations advocating the union and strengthening of the various governmental agencies relating to pure foods, quarantine, vital statistics, and human health. Thus united and administered without partiality to or discrimination against any school of medicine or system of healing, they would constitute a single health service, not subordinated to any commercial or financial interests, but devoted exclusively to the conservation of human life and efficiency. Moreover, this health service should co-operate with the health agencies of our various states and cities without interference with their prerogatives, or with the freedom of individuals to employ such medical or hygienic aid as they may see fit."

All of this sounds mighty good, but it is an awfully long way from a plank in a platform to a law passed by congress! We have seen many and various planks that went into a platform as good sound lumber but came out looking like a lot of second hand tooth-picks!

The pernicious activity of Frederick Stearns & Co., in the matter of their method of exploiting a "patent medicine" headache remedy, "SHAC." was shown up in the *Journal* of the A. M. A. for July 20th. Originally it was advertised as "Stearns Head Ache Cure"; hence the name "shac" which, as it is not a "cure," they were forced to take when the pure food law made extreme falsehood the cause of much unpleasantness. In this country it has become a "remedy"; in England it is still a "cure." The "remedy" or "cure" is nothing more nor less than our old friend acetanilide and caffeine; our dear old friend "antikamnia" and a host of other dear old friend nostrums. But Frederick Stearns & Co., honest and upright pharmaceutical manufacturers appealing to the physicians of this country to use their products, do not wish to be known as at the same time energetically promoting a "patent medicine"—as advertising "shac" in cars, etc. No; they do the dirty business under another name, "The Zymole Company." Why should physicians patronize a concern that does such objectionable business on the side? There are plenty of clean manufacturers that make at least as good pharmaceuticals as Stearns—and *don't* engage in the patent medicine business as well.